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# Maximum Car Limit

—and—

# Full Crew Bills

Statement of

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Before the Roads Committee of the House of Delegates

1914 Session

of the Virginia Legislature

*r. Chairman and Gentlemen:*

A number of bills have been introduced before the Virginia egislature which if enacted as presented would cost the Norfolk Western Railway alone, over $2,700,000 per annum. They are ch bills as the Maximum Train Bill, the Full Crew Bill, the aboose Bill, the Headlight Bill, the Section Bill, the Railway anchise Bill, and others. The first of these measures which I ention, the Maximum Train Bill, limiting the number of freight rs to be handled in any one train to fifty, would cost the Norfolk Western Railway over $1,600,000 per annum on the basis of the esent business, and would mean the financial ruin of the company. he rapid growth of business which has marked the development the State during the past ten years has made it necessary for the nagement of this company to take measures to meet the increased penses which have prevailed year by year on account of the pay- nt of higher wages, greater taxes and the construction of non- venue producing structures, represented largely, so far as this npany is concerned, by overhead and undergrade highway cross- gs. The policy of this company has heretofore been to economize the conduct of its transportation business. Conducting the nsportation of a railroad safely, conveniently and economically what may be termed the science of railroading, and is the item expense to which managing officers give their greatest time and ention. The maintenance of way and structures and of equip- nt can be regulated to a fixed sum per month, and this ex- nditure means the maintenance of the ways and structures and equipment to a high degree of efficiency or permitting it to eriorate. The Norfolk & Western Railway Company has kept road and equipment to the highest degree of efficiency. The nducting of transportation, however, presents a different problem, l the effort must be to reduce the unit of cost of handling busi- s which is offered to the company. It has been the experience years of managing officers of railroads that the only way to ure low cost of transportation is by increasing the number of s of freight carried by each train. The management of the rfolk & Western Railway Company commenced years ago to rease the tractive power of its locomotives, the carrying capacity

of its cars and to eliminate adverse grades and curves wherever i was physically possible for it to do so. Large terminal yards hav also been constructed and millions of dollars have been spent eac year with the one definite end in view, namely, that of reducin the cost of transportation. The result of the experience and effo and expenditures has been that instead of hauling 25 or 30 ca per train or even as high as 50 or 60 cars, the number of ca handled in trains in various portions of the State of Virginia h been brought up to from 60 to 100 cars. It must, therefore, b evident to the mind of any man who has duly considered th question that to go back to the conditions that prevailed ten yea ago would mean that the money expended for better grades an heavier equipment has been thrown away, and that there canno be again money spent for such purposes. There will be no nee of sums to be expended for further development or improvemen and the stopping of development and improvement extends to a classes and lines of business. There can only be one result, ar that is the financial ruin of this property, and the ruin of th property means great damage to the State of Virginia.

During the past ten years gross earnings have increased, b net earnings have not increased proportionately, on account tremendously increasing expenses.

The following table is a statement of the wages paid trainm in 1897 and in 1913, and it must also be considered that where in 1897 the pay was based on a day of ten hours it is now bas on a day of *nine* hours:

## COMPARISON OF WAGES, 1897 AND 1913.

*Conductors Pay per* 100 *Miles.*

| | 1897 | 1913 | Increase Per Cent. | Avg. Pa Per Mo |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Passenger. ..... | $1 75 | $2 90 | 65.7 | $185 |
| Through Freight. ..... | 2 80 | 4 10 | 46.4 | |
| Local Freight. ..... | 3 00 | 4 50 | 50.0 | 141 |

*Brakemens' Pay per* 100 *Miles.*

| | 1897 | 1913 | Increase Per Cent. | Avg. Pay Per Month |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Passenger. ..... | $ 90 | $1 60 | 77.8 | $113 30 |
| Local Freight. ..... | 2 00 | 3 00 | 50.0 | |
| Through Freight. ..... | 1 75 | 2 75 | 57.1 | 103 55 |

*Engineers' Pay per* 100 *Miles.*

| | 1897 | 1913 | Increase Per Cent. | Avg. Pay Per Month |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Passenger. ..... | $3 00 | $4 40 | 46.7 | $230 16 |
| Through Freight. ..... | 4 00 | 5 25 | 31.3 | |
| Mallet Eng. ..... | | 6 50 | 62.5 | 180 00 |
| Local Freight. ..... | 4 00 | 5 50 | 37.5 | |

*Firemens' Pay per* 100 *Miles.*

| | 1897 | 1913 | Increase Per Cent. | Avg. Pay Per Month |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Passenger. ..... | $1 50 | $2 50 | 66.7 | $128 65 |
| Through Freight. ..... | 1 75 | 3 10 | 77.1 | |
| Mallet Eng. ..... | | 4 00 | 128.6 | |
| Local Freight. ..... | 1 75 | 3 25 | 85.7 | 118 54 |

You will observe that this statement shows the *average* pay per month that employees in train service can make by working full time.

The result of the increased wages and expenses of train service has been that the cost per train mile of handling freight has more than doubled during this period:

In 1897 the cost per freight train mile..... $1 02
In 1913 the cost per freight train mile..... 2 10

During this period the revenue received from hauling passengers and freight have decreased as follows:

| | 1897 | 1913 | Decrease Per Cent. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Revenue per passenger per mile—cents.. | 3.179 | 2.617 | 17.678 |
| Revenue per ton freight per mile—cents.. | .445 | .429 | 3.59 |

From these comparative figures it is apparent that in the face of increased wages and costs of operation, the only way to increase revenue, not proportionately but at all is to haul more cars and tons per train. This has been done as shown by the following:

| | 1897 | 1913 | Increase Per Cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Average cars per Frt. train. | 29.80 | 40.17 | 34.8( |
| Average tons of frt. per train. | 325.31 | 763.84 | 134.8( |
| Expenses per freight train mile. | $ 1 02 | $ 2 10 | 105.8( |
| Earnings per freight train mile. | 1 44 | 3 27 | 127 0( |
| Taxes paid in Virginia | $ 232,405 98 | $ 830,669 55 | 257 4( |
| Fixed charges. | 2,367,105 66 | 4,245,567 56 | 79 3( |

When link and pin couplings were in use more than 50 car were frequently and whenever possible hauled in each train.

The number of men employed by the Norfolk & Western i train service is Virginia is, by classes:

| | |
|---|---|
| Passenger Engineers. | 62 |
| Freight Engineers. | 547 |
| Passenger Firemen. | 62 |
| Freight Firemen. | 580 |
| Passenger Conductors. | 51 |
| Freight Conductors. | 265 |
| Passenger Brakemen. | 62 |
| Freight Brakemen—white. | 560 |
| Freight Brakemen—colored. | 139 |
| A total of | 2,328 |

Generally trains of more than 50 cars are run between Bluefiel W. Va., and Norfolk, Va.

There are employed between these points, in train servic 996 men.

There are employed in Virginia in other branches of railro service, by classes:

| | |
|---|---|
| Shop men. | 5,574 |
| Station service. | 1,502 |
| Track service. | 5,459 |
| | 12,535 |

The passage of this act would increase the number of train- employed in Virginia, 716; and this would apply chiefly on tions of the road where we now have 996.

Using the month of October, 1913, as a basis, and this is not of our heaviest months, in order to comply with the terms of bill and handle the business offered in Virginia in trains of ars each, would have required 588 additional freight trains, esenting 57,300 additional train miles, and costing $125,473.11 e than it did cost to handle the October business.

On this basis and calculating the additional cost by freight icts would mean a cost per annum of $1,621,677.32, in addition e amount actually required to move the business, and without single benefit to the public or to the employees, except to in- se the number of trainmen on a portion of the road, and with disadvantage of more trains, increasing the opportunity for lent thereto, and more men to be exposed to death and injury.

It cannot be disputed that the more trains on a road, the more rtunity of accident to not only those trains and the employees em, but to people at highway crossings and in the streets of and towns and on tracks generally, to say nothing of in- ed opportunity to kill and injure stock and set out fires. As tter of fact trains of more than 50 cars on account of being er, are handled more slowly and cause the deaths of a very smaller number of employees and others than lighter trains.

I have had prepared an analysis of the deaths and injuries d by trains on the Norfolk & Western road of more than 50 and 50 cars or less in the State of Virginia during the two ending June 30, 1913. Our statistics show that the total s run in one year, based on actual trains run July 1st, to mber 30th, 1913 were as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| rains of more than 50 cars were.... | 16712 | 35 per cent. |
| rains of 50 cars or less were..... | 31112 | 65 per cent. |
| | 47824 | 100 per cent. |

Trains of more than 50 cars killed 1 employee, injured 179 Er
Trains of 50 cars or less killed 20 employees, injured 521 Er

The total mileage of trains of more than 50 cars
was .....4,173,027 m
The total mileage of trains of 50 cars or less was....7,770,382 m
The total passenger train mileage was.....5,137,293 m

of the 20 deaths and 521 injuries by trains of 50 cars or les deaths and 114 injuries were by passenger trains. These casual are from all causes, whether struck by trains, falling from tr or in train accidents. The *one* employee killed by a train more than 50 cars was struck and run over. Of the *twenty* ployees killed by trains of less than fifty cars, *three* were ki by being struck by obstructions and *three* were killed by fal from cars or engines.

The following figures give number of people other than ployees killed and injured by trains of more and less than 50 c

Trains of more than 50 cars, killed 8 and injured 16.

Trains of 50 cars or less, killed 76 and injured 193.

Passenger trains killed 24 and injured 42, and these are cluded in the killed and injured by trains of less than 50 car

Of the *eight* people killed by trains of more than 50 cars was killed in a train accident. All the deaths were due to fal from and being struck by trains.

Of the 76 killed by trains of less than 50 cars *four* were passers killed in train accidents, 22 were killed in falling trains (getting on and off), and 50 were killed by being struc trains.

From these figures it is perfectly obvious that decreasing number of trains run by increasing the train load, is not on the interest of economy, but that it is the greatest possible guard to the employees themselves, and to the public gene The more trains run and the more employees put on the trai necessity the more accidents, deaths and injuries.

With regard to the breaking in two of trains—it is a fact they do break in two, and it is also true that this source of tr is not confined to trains of fifty cars or less. The breaking i of a train or the bursting of an air hose causes the auto

rgency application of the air brake. The sudden stopping of train by the emergency application of the air brake will some-es break up cars, and cause death and injury. Disastrous wrecks e been attributed to this cause, and these wrecks have happened rains of fifty cars or less as well as to longer trains. It is also that we get the strongest equipment and the best air hose and olers that money will buy. As long as there are railroads, there be accidents. Our best efforts are directed towards reducing units (trains) that cause accidents, and the number of men ex-d to the hazards of the business, with due regard to the efficiency he service and the welfare of the employees.

From the 1st to the 15th of January, 1913, I have kept a state-t showing delays to trains in Virginia on account of breaking wo. The delays caused by trains breaking in two amounted to hours and 57 minutes, an average of 72 minutes per train ted, but the average to the whole number of trains run unted to less than 4½ minutes per train. To save 4½ minutes freight train run does not justify the expenditure of over 0,000 and the increased risk of accident and injury.

With reference to trainmen being kept on duty more than en hours and relieved on the road on account of the Sixteen r Federal Law. The law prohibits except in emergencies the ing of trainmen on duty more than 16 hours. When from cause trains are caught by this law, we either send a fresh to bring the train into the terminal, or if this is not possible, he train up at a siding, having regard for the comfort of the oyees. During the year 1913, on all divisions and freight dis-s in Virginia, there were 58,885 road movements, and of this ber only 873 were affected from any cause whatever by the ation of the 16 hour law, the percentage of trains delayed nd 16 hours being 1.5%. I venture to assert that this average compare favorably with any manufactory or other business. I make no mis-statement when I say that it would be physi-impossible to transport the business which is offered us gh the State of Virginia from Bluefield to Norfolk with s limited to 50 cars to each train.

The only reason for the introduction of these bills is to compel aw all railways of the State to employ more men in train

service without any possible advantage to the public, which mu eventually pay the freight, and in order for the road to be ab to live, without providing one cent for betterments and improv ments, the freight rates within the State would have to be m terially advanced.

You could pass no measures which would do more to cau the deaths and injury of trainmen and others than to pass th Car Limit bill, increasing the number of trains, and the so-call Full Crew bill, increasing the number of brakemen on trains.

There was introduced in the House of Representatives Washington, on December 13th, 1913, the Stevens Bill, by the ter of which the Interstate Commerce Commission is authorized up the complaint, or on its own motion, without complaint, to vestigate the roadway, track, structures, equipment and facilit used by common carriers in interstate or foreign commerce; t operating rules, regulations, methods, train schedules, size of tr crews, hours of railway employees, or any other matter affecti the safe operation of trains engaged in interstate or foreign co merce. It would seem that if this bill should become law it wo turn over to the Interstate Commerce Commission practically of these questions which the General Assembly of Virginia is n considering, and when Congress has acted in these matters, work of the General Assembly would be nullified.

I am speaking to you more in my capacity as a citizen of State than as the Vice-President of the largest tax payer in y State. The passage of these unnecessary measures can only m the ruin of your railroad properties, and the largest industry your State cannot be seriously crippled without working detrim to the business interests of the State. I cannot too strongly u upon you the great importance of rejecting these bills which offered to you disguised as safety measures, but which have reason or justification back of them. *The sole reason* is to com the railroads by law to employ more men, and this *without reg* to the dangers of such employment.

N. D. MAHER,

*Vice-President Norfolk and Western Railway Company*